

The Loss and Restoration of Godly Masculinity

By Jay Wegter and Shane Haffey

How does God define masculinity?

Genesis 2:15 – Man is to work. True masculinity is not a matter of exhibiting supposedly masculine characteristics (‘machismo’) devoid of the relational context of responsibility, stewardship, leadership, protection, and provision. Like a truck with stiff shock absorbers, masculinity handles best under a substantial load of responsibility.

Genesis 2:17 – Man is to obey God’s truth and proclaim it. Implied in his God-given responsibility of leadership is his role as boundary-setter. He is to establish the world according to godly principles and do so by communicating the Word of God. Establishing biblical principles of obedience, moral boundaries in the family, and proclamation of the knowledge of God is a masculine endeavor. He is also to warn and protect against disobedience.

Genesis 2:18 – He is to lead. Not only is he fitted physically for this purpose, he is also fitted cognitively and spiritually. God has equipped him with the faculties sufficient to lead a wife and children. It is all the more imperative in our feminized egalitarian culture for a man to demonstrate this spiritual leadership in the home today. This capacity of spiritual headship is a gift of the Holy Spirit at regeneration, but takes time to develop. The believing man, when his eyes are set on the gospel of Christ, has immeasurable resources at his disposal.

Adam was a prototypical King. Adam was to function as a viceregent along with his helpmate in the work of procreation and subduing of the earth. This means *man* is a human delegate of God in bringing order to the earth—to tame its wildness if you will. We should not read these chapters in Genesis primarily to see how creation came to be, but also to study the *telos* of the creation, that is the purpose and goal of creation. Paul alludes to this in 1 Corinthians 11:9 saying that man was not created for woman but woman for man. The book of origins informs us of the created order—as such it the history of origins, but also unfolds God’s ‘creation structures’ (man and woman, family, headship, etc.). Man is to labor, to obey truth, and to proclaim truth. He is to bring order, or “tame” the earth by establishing godly principles and boundaries. This includes protecting those in his care by means of the truth, and proclaiming the knowledge of God—issuing forth in the raising up of God-fearing communities, beginning with the members of his own household.

Adam is the original theologizer; for his role in naming involves *imaging* God as distinction-maker and definer. In setting forth distinctions, he is a ‘theologizer’ (describing relations between: man/woman, creature/Creator, parent/child, animal/plant, etc.). Man’s subduing of the earth is only going to be as successful as the accuracy his displays in his naming and defining efforts (EX. if he labels a cow as a pig, that’s problematic). Therefore, fidelity to God’s revealed Word is crucial to the success of Adam’s naming, and of ours. (EX. in a Hindu country a *sadhu* was sitting on a dung heap, meditating on the oneness of all things—what folly, this is failed subduing, for he was ‘meditating’ on the supposed *absence of distinctions* between all things).

How was godly masculinity lost?

Failing to theologize, name, and subdue accordingly, leads to THE EVE THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE. That theory being: by experimentation we can decide what is right for us, “I want to see for myself,” (sadly experimentation with sin is descriptive of our age, whether sexual immorality, drugs, etc.). Adam allowed his wife, Eve to experiment with sin; he did not warn her or prevent her from eating the forbidden fruit. CHAOS becomes the female version or expression of total depravity which is the *spirit of Jezebel*—namely that through sensuality and subjective experimentation I can decide what is best for me. This sensuality is sometimes referred to as the ‘feminine shadow’ (it is to be ruled by one’s sinful passions and impulses; described by Paul as, ‘their god is their belly’, Phil 3:18-19)—and when it is manifested in the male, *Jezebel is having her way*—she is ‘neutering’ masculinity at warp speed.

There is a radical rejection of theology in the Eve theory of knowledge. When Adam forfeited his protective headship role, he allowed chaos to ensue. By contrast, masculine spirituality has to do with naming, separating, distinguishing, ordering, implementing, and enforcing God-given distinctions and commands. Thus, theologizing involves imitating God (Eph 5:1-2), for truth applied issues forth in moral, spiritual, and physical order (1 Cor 14:33). When this is missing, we see moral absurdities: *evil called good, and good called evil* (Is 5:20). Divine judgment has arrived today in what Isaiah refers to as a ‘spirit of distortion’ (Is 19:14, and Is 24). This monstrous chaos has arrived; for we see men referred to as women, and women as men—an intentional hellish, Jezebelian ‘gender-blender’ agenda of chaos and confusion.

Believing men don’t love theology because they don’t understand its practicality and its central place in their calling. Theology is life, the very guardian of life. Men have deferred spiritual influence to their wives, and to their ministers. Therefore, it is no wonder, as a consequence why nearly every remaining denomination has fallen into liberalism. Steve Lawson notes that only by the study of theology can we ‘grow up spiritually’. The reason why is that theology is the study of God—His Person, His works, ways, wonders, and will. We can only truly love, imitate, and glorify the God we are desirous of knowing. A passion for His glory is a passion for who He is. And who He is, is set forth in theology.

What happened in the fall in Adam’s revolt?

In the fall, masculinity was emasculated. There would be conflict in the marriage relationship, internal and external (Gen 3:16-17). There would be a perpetual bent to relinquish leadership to one’s wife (“ask your mother”), man abdicating his role—an internal disposition toward passivity and/or, a propensity to dominate and silence the woman with harshness. The woman would look to usurp her husband’s role and to be independent of his headship. She would seek a solution to her insecurity by seeking to control and manipulate her husband.

The judgment of a *cursed ground* is tied to Adam giving over his headship role to his wife—that took place when he took the forbidden fruit from her hand and consumed it (Gen 3:17). Adam followed his wife in disobedience when she proposed rebelling against God’s command. “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which

I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat from it’ (Gen 3:17a). “Cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. ‘Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; and you will eat the plants of the field; by the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return’” (Gen 3:17b-19). Adam abdicated his masculine role; he did not *work* to provide for, and protect his wife from ‘intellectual rape’ by the serpent, thus he would now have to *toil* in order to provide and protect his wife.

There would be conflict in relationship. The man would keep his role as head, yet would seek to fulfill it without conflict (‘can’t I just choose an easier way?’). Manhood would not be redefined, yet it would be resisted as well as marred (distorted from its original course and meaning). Fallen man would lack the inward propensity to exercise spiritual headship according to God’s order. He would also be confronted with external difficulties that would seek to resist and undermine his role. *First*, in the face of the man’s abdication of leadership, women, as a result of her gender-specific wound/curse would seek to usurp the role of man (Gen 3:16b). *Second*, man would face opposition from the physical creation itself in providing for his family, and in fulfilling his ordained role. It is implied that this would lead to guilt, emotional inadequacy, and leave man open to criticism and attacks regarding his fitness. With his inadequacy already on display, and feeling much like Sisyphus (a Greek myth in which Sisyphus had to endlessly roll a stone uphill only to see it roll down again). And, fallen men today, not eager to take a verbal punch from their wives in the ‘solar plexus’ of their inadequacy, often opt for passivity as a self-protective strategy. Here it is in a nutshell: *conflict* in relationship, *conflict* from the creation, and *conflict* in the inner man would pressure the man to wave the white flag of surrender in abdication of his role as leader, provider, and protector.

We were blind-sided by the sexual revolution of the 60’s that through the “pill” woman could do anything man could do, especially in the workplace. By postponing her child-bearing, she could create her own worth and value by means of career. She could use her sexuality to manipulate and control: a) total control of her ‘own’ womb through the pill, and, b) control of her male cohorts in the workplace by making her miniskirt, push-up bra, and stiletto heels part of her corporate uniform (a flagrant, not a subtle enterprise that cleavage is power).

In 9th Century B.C. Israel, 900 or so men ate at Jezebel’s table (1 Kings 18:19). Jezebel entertained them by sensuality, the worship of the feminine, and, even though they were probably castrated, they were still advocates of her sensual reign. She enthroned lust, she weaponized sex—and though she is never recorded as personally stabbing anyone, through her wiles, thousands of Jews died (including the prophets of God slain at her command, see 1 Kings 18:4-19). Eating at her table was a powerful picture of the advocacy of her idolatrous designs. To have a place at her table meant that you had her acceptance and favor. These males eating at her table typify the pathetic, pathological male today—almost a cartoon-like joke, a caricature which is a radical distortion of what God designed a man to be. Yet, this is what the *spirit of Jezebel* does to masculinity, and it is taking place in our culture and in our churches.

Worship of the female results in the subduing of the male—that is Jezebel’s design. And those she could not seduce, she killed (the prophets of God). Consider also the shock of

Jeremiah 44:15-19 which describes men happily controlled by the *spirit of Jezebel*. At that time in apostate Judah there were sturdy men capable of wielding a sword, or slaying a bull, yet, these men are helping their wives make cakes for the queen of heaven! This is the complete abdication of masculine leadership, and the total advocacy of female spiritual headship.

Throughout the O.T. we see the battle raging for a restored masculinity. The prophets of God continually laying the charge of apostasy at the feet of the fathers (Jer 7:18). These failed fathers abdicated their role as spiritual leaders, and so often, that failure was the consequence of intermarriage with the pagan nations around them. Gentile wives introduced their false gods into Jewish homes. Balaam's counsel has never been outdone! (Num 25:1-11; 31:16).

We must make careful note that the disappearance of masculinity is always tied to the erosion of the knowledge of God. As theology is neglected, the knowledge of God wanes, and so does masculinity with it. Godliness and masculinity are inseparably linked to the knowledge of God. The crowning reason for this is as follows: believing men are to image God (in their leadership, teaching, and holiness) so that the love, truth, and authority of God the Father are evident in their lives. Thus, as men they have a *theologizing mandate* from their Creator. As such, men are a living picture of the God's character, the ultimate Patriarch; He provides, guards, protects, leads, instructs, loves, blesses—and He does so through His truth.

How is godly manhood recovered?

Our godly masculinity is only restored in Christ. Our self-centeredness and passivity have to die in *co-crucifixion* with Christ in order to be equipped to fulfill Christ's commands (Gal 2:20). Built into this idea of godly masculinity is a new masculine mandate with Christ Himself as the New Masculine Man and as the Source of the new masculine man (Col 3:9-11ff.). Christ is the prototype of the masculine man. In His person and role as Last Adam, He has the pedigree, and comprehensive resources needed to make us His new creatures. For His elect, He willingly reverses the curse and restores the true masculinity lost at the fall. This restoration is founded upon the judgment of our Adamic nature in Christ's work of death, burial, and resurrection. He was brutally beaten, a twisted a crown of thorns was placed upon His head, nails driven through his cartilage, tearing through tissue, blood emptied out to the point of 'spilling water; He gave it all! Pierced, spit on, humiliated and shamed—yet no bones were broken and no decay. Our 'new man' came at infinite cost. The genuine believer IS a new man in Christ. But, the growing saint must learn to assert the full potential of his 'new man' by putting on the 'replacement behaviors' described in Ephesians 4:14-32 and Colossians 3:8-4:6.

What our Savior has accomplished is so much more glorious than the fictional little Greek mythological gods (the 'plastic Nimrods' known today as Marvel Studios' *The Avengers*, et al). Whenever I see boys (big or small) playing with superman and batman dolls I think that the most elaborate fantasy of male adequacy that toymakers can envision pales in comparison to the reality of restored manhood in Christ. So, this restoration of godly masculinity is earned and effectually purchased on Golgotha. This battered and bloody picture of our Savior in His passion is nothing like the GQ model Jesus depicted in modern film—manicured hands with a flower-laced license plate on his donkey that reads, "be nice." Jesus flipped over tables, He said

powerfully insulting truths. He went out of his way to perform miracles on the Sabbath which provoked His opponents. He preached judgment and repentance. He slept on the ground. Yet, for all His rugged qualities, it was His willingness to become the perfect sacrifice—giving Himself up to divine wrath—that secured the believer’s restored manhood.

How does Christ’s substitutionary work restore our godly masculinity?

1. Our pathological old man, our failed masculine man, our Adamic man (by virtue of our connection and solidarity with Adam and his overt failure) had to be fully judged, punished and executed in the Person of our Savior before we could step into the role of the new masculine man (2 Cor 5:21; Gal 3:10).

2. This judgment of our failed old man took place at Calvary. Our covenant Head is now Head of a new race of men and women. This change in covenant heads could only take place if our legal connection to the first Adam was cancelled. And what a spectacle the cancellation of that connection to Adam was! For, our Savior took on Himself our sinful failure as men! Consider that in His dying He was bearing on His cross our passivity, fear, lust, abdication of leadership, cowardice, our idolatry of sex and women, our slavery, our fearful paralysis of masculinity. In a word: He judged our failed subduing, ‘our broken scepter’ inherited from Adam.

3. He made us ‘new men’ by restoring the knowledge of God through regeneration—through which co-crucifixion and co-resurrection were applied to us (Rom 6; 2 Cor 5:14-15; Gal 2:20; 5:24, etc.). Solidarity with Adam has been replaced by solidarity with Christ—union with Him (Jn 15). This solidarity with Christ is a new covenant, with covenant obligations that are binding upon believing men! It is at this juncture that the church is failing, by allowing the culture to define manhood and the obligations upon men, rather than Christ Himself. As a consequence, men are not being disciplined, and not being admonished to assume their headship and proactively appropriate their *new man virtues in Christ*, purchased in the New Covenant.

According to the feminized church, men are to lead primarily by serving, but according to the Word of God, men are to serve by leading. To serve by leading is to take responsibility and to establish biblical priorities expressed in spiritual vision and mission. God is the architect of godly masculinity, and He attaches His own glory to it! The man who is serving by leading articulates and implements the Lord’s priorities in his family. Male passivity is a failed strategy for managing risk. And yet countless men fall into that trap. Part of our protection from that pitfall, is to know why God’s honor and glory are joined to the execution of a man’s godly masculinity. For, Christ is building His church. And, essential to a strong, pure, and disciple-making church is that the men of the church are strong, pure, disciple-makers! How did this truth become lost? Answer: the church adopted a business model, a professional clerical ministry. We need to repent of our apostate ecclesiology and recover the Great Commission.

God has constructed the universe around His glory. And yet, grasping that pervasive truth can be evasive because you can’t quantify the beauty, excellence, holiness, and majesty inherent in glory. Glory refuses to submit itself to an ‘app’ or to a church program, or to a scorecard of attendance or hand-raising. For the most part today, churches are not setting

forth glory and vision. As a consequence, their members find that religion fits in a small compartment. One of the symptoms of the weak church is that men reduce true religion to *ought's* and *should's*, and then seek glory and renewal in recreation, pastimes, sports, and videos. God has a cosmological calling on men as those appointed to raise up, and sustain God-fearing communities. This gives us insight into why throughout redemptive history, the evil one has been after the seed of the woman (Gen 3:15). The devil is going after heads of homes. A major attack is being waged through pornography, for smut has the destructive potential to shred a man's godly masculinity. We have all heard the slogan: those who do not learn from history are condemned to repeat it. Much of the O.T. is the historical record of God judging and destroying countless Israelites because as a nation, they had absorbed the idolatry of the surrounding Canaanite fertility cults with their worship of sex and death. The Western world is currently repeating this idolatrous history in its sexual and gender anarchy.

We have designated the devil's anti-masculine tactic, *the spirit of Jezebel*. It is a 'weaponized cosmology' of creature worship (Rom 1:25). The devil seeks to disfigure true masculinity through 'Jezebelian chaos'—that is, the abandonment of holy categories and true worship. The false prophet Balaam used 'Jezebelian counsel' to lead Israel into idolatry. Balaam's wicked genius utilized a plan to drag Israelite men into the worship of idols by means of illicit sex offered to them by Midianite women (Num 25:1-11; 31:16-18). The evil one has not changed tactics; down to this very day he finds great success in the deceptive offer of, 'free sex', 'no consequence sex' (certainly an ever-present sub-theme in Las Vegas).

Lucifer is after the seed of the ultimate patriarch. In the recent history of the Western world, the devil has raised up feminism as a ploy against patriarchy. The evil one's success is witnessed by the fact that even though believing men are called to theologize, they have for the most part abdicated their calling—and as a consequence, they blend in far too neatly with the world. Without theology, they can mingle easily by donning the camouflage of this age. Without theology, they are especially vulnerable to the sensual magnetism of the female, and to sex as 'source' instead of to the Lord Himself. By contrast, *make your wife glorious* is the believing husband's *telos* (Eph 5:25-30). By *telos* we mean that the wife's glory and the husband's glory are tied together and linked so that their glory is a function of how the man leads and watches over his wife and children. If a man is to bring glory to his wife and family, he will do this by occupying his part in the 'divine glory story'. That means he must have a fundamental understanding of the cosmology of gender (male-female) and why it 'works' in the practical realm due to the divine design behind it. Cosmology makes the male-female dance possible—there is a glorious *fitness for one another* in the divine tapestry of complementarity.

The big picture here in terms of patriarchy and the flow of redemptive history is larger than we can imagine. Consider that Abraham was the foundational patriarch. He owned no land in Canaan, yet it states in Romans chapter 4 that he is *heir of the world* (Rom 4:13). Abraham, even while a tent-dwelling vagrant, demonstrated covenant faithfulness. As such he served as a cosmological 'place-holder' of the coming perfect *teleological holiness* that will characterize the future Kingdom. What a picture of the faithful masculine man so needed in the church

today! Abraham's hope, and the hope of all those who follow in his footsteps of faith (Rom 4:16) is a hope placed upon God Himself (Who will provide for them a city and country of their own, thus, "God is not ashamed to be called their God," Hebrews 11:9-16). Think of it, God is not ashamed to associate His magnificent name with theirs! The church's crucial need today is men with clarity of vision, who will lead by godly masculinity in the Body of Christ. Strong churches depend upon the men being equipped through Christ to function and lead as theologizers. Our Lord is able to furnish a man to fully step into his calling to cover, protect, warn, train, nurture and equip those for those in his care and for whom he is responsible.

We are covenant creatures created for covenant relationships. Old Testament ceremonies were for the purpose of renewing covenants and recalling covenant oaths and responsibilities.ⁱ Though we are in a different dispensation now, believing men have covenant obligations to the Lord Jesus Christ. For, He has given husbands and fathers the command and headship to lead. As a consequence, there are no small breaches of covenant. For, a man's obedience or negligence will greatly affect his wife, family, and community (Ex 34:6-7). A man's covenant obligations to Christ can be expressed in the term, *patriarchy*. American feminist, Kate Millett observed that pornography builds a *pathological patriarchy* (selfish, drooling thugs). But, Bible-believing men have an even more accurate diagnosis: i.e. porn is a window into the fallen sick heart of Adam. Our pornographic society is building a *pathological patriarchy*. But, let us not forget that the created order of our world is one of patriarchy because it is ruled by God the Father (Dr. Peter Jones warns that if we lose the Trinitarian truth of the patriarchy of God, we ultimately lose the gospel because it is the Father who gives His Son).

All fatherhood is a reflection of God's fatherhood, whether a true or a distorted reflection, whether the man exercises it for good or ill. The question is not will men be fathers and rule, but rather will they do so according to their fallen natures, or by the Holy Spirit, with a vision to reflect God the Father? Totalitarianism is the 'government fix' for the absence of the stable family and father-led home. The terror of statist rule is the consequence of a *pathological patriarchy*. The government does not view it that way, but simply fills the vacuum left by generations of non-theologizers. The soft underbelly of patriarchy is fallen man's sinful adamic nature through which he indulges in anger, bitterness, resentment, passivity, idolatry, and lust. By divine design, patriarchy is the source of divinely ordained structure, freedom, and order of society. Patriarchy is that mantle of covering that holds the fragile fabric of a society together by providing: order, protection, warning, instruction, and nurture. But, the world today is attacking patriarchy, stating that it is absurd to equate privilege with a male's biology.

Our culture is in a very bad place under the full weight of God's curses. It seems that new levels of insolence are reached every week. For, just a few days ago, our own U.S. Navy commissioned a ship named after a homosexual activist, Harvey Milk. Can you imagine being a sailor on that ship? God's wrath and judgment are coming down upon us. Delusion and insanity about sex and gender have drawn His wrath down now (Rom 1:18ff.). It's time for God's covenant people to cry for deliverance, "Do not pray to human idols." "Let no one boast in men," says Paul (1 Cor 3:21). A quick fix sermon or book will not deliver you. Turn to Christ,

the last Adam, the only good man, and the only source of godly masculinity.

The gospel of Christ is not general benevolence; it is not generic love for a generic people. It is the Lord making oath and promise to His own—to those He purchased (Eph 5:25-27). Christ is the ultimate Man; we can only receive our manhood back through Him. God in Christ came as the perfect Husband, the perfect man. He came to restore fallen men and failed husbands. He nailed our sin, brokenness, failures, pollution, and pathological patriarchy to the cross. He did it by becoming our covenant Substitute and Head. He assumed the full legal guilt of the damnable lives of His people, all that He might become the Representative and the right-standing of His people. His betrothal to the elect is the most monogamous event ever, whereby He makes a covenant with His bride. Where is our fidelity to Him?

Next to the cross, monogamous heterosexual marriage is the most mocked relationship in the secular world of progressives today—the reason why is because it reflects and represents God’s covenant marriage to His people. His promise is revealed in His covenant as personal Lord who knows His children, and pours out upon them His love, mercy, grace, provision, blessing, and future glory. Theology allows us to ‘grow up’ and to appropriate the magnificent resources of godly masculinity found in Christ the Lord. Through the power of the Spirit we are to proactively ‘put on’ the behaviors of the new man—the behaviors Christ purchased for His men (Eph 4:14-32; Col 3:8-4:6).

A Time for Self-examination

Christ is seeking to build a strong church, a pure church, and a disciple-making church. That can only take place if the men are committed to being theologizers who are diligent in their sanctification, and who are living as disciple-making disciples. Every believing man counts and is indispensable to this endeavor, Scripture knows of no spectators or passengers. Here are common defective areas wherein men need to regard themselves as potential ‘game-changers’, as *instruments in the hands of the Redeemer*: **1)** Discipleship is not only teaching, it is modeling a life worthy of being imitated by a disciple (Lu 6:40). Thus, because of that reality, it is easy to see why so many men opt out of disciple-making (i.e. they do not have a Christian life worthy of imitation). **2)** Next, countless believing men have assumed that ministry is best conducted by professionals. And, as a consequence, these men do not regard their spiritual influence in home and church to be absolutely crucial to the health of the body. **3)** And, finally, if men are not committed to grow as theologizers, their calling to be spiritual influencers will be hindered. The solution to these areas of weakness will not be solved by attending one more seminar. The answer is found in our faithfulness to the Great Commission. For, our Lord’s last command is His mandate for the church—believers are to teach one another to observe/obey what Christ has commanded. Discipleship is about learning obedience in a context of life-on-life soul care. This is only way that the men of the church will be empowered and released to ministry.

End Notes:

Adapted from: Toby Sumpter, “The Politics of Sex,” Christ Church, Moscow, ID. Kevin Bell, researcher.